



State of Wisconsin
Jim Doyle, Governor

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent



NEWS RELEASE

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Wisconsin to receive aid for educating students displaced by hurricanes Katrina and Rita

MADISON—State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster and Gov. Jim Doyle announced today that Wisconsin schools will share in federal Hurricane Education Recovery Act aid for educating students who were displaced by hurricanes Katrina and Rita last fall.

"Wisconsin opened its arms to hurricane survivors and welcomed them to our schools and communities. The recently enacted Hurricane Education Recovery Act will provide funding to support schools that enrolled students from hurricane-affected areas," Burmaster said.

"In the aftermath of hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the people of Wisconsin rallied to help hurricane survivors through donations of time, energy, housing, and money. But for survivors of these disasters, rebuilding their lives is an ongoing process, and this federal funding will go a long way toward helping students who have been displaced continue their education," Doyle said.

While the bulk of the \$1.6 billion aid package is directed to the states of Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas to restart school operations, the U.S. Department of Education will make \$645 million available to states for emergency impact aid for displaced students. K-12 schools will receive up to \$6,000 per displaced student or up to \$7,500 for displaced students enrolled in special education classes. Congress has appropriated another \$5 million for homeless youth displaced by the hurricanes to support activities that are allowed under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

"When the hurricanes brought their devastation to Gulf Coast states, Wisconsin schools thought about the human needs of hurricane survivors and quickly enrolled students so there would be the least amount of disruption to their education. The federal aid to support this educational outreach is truly needed and most welcome," Burmaster added.

The Department of Public Instruction awaits clarification from the U.S. Department of Education on the streamlined application process, quarterly counts of displaced students, the quarterly aid payment schedule, and the amount of aid the state will receive. The agency estimates that public, charter, and private schools in Wisconsin have enrolled about 300 students who were displaced by the hurricanes.

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